

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 05225 202200Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPTA-02 L-03 SS-15 INR-10 SP-02
/047 W

-----126656 202208Z /62

P 202157Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8064

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STADIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PN
SUBJECT: AUTHORITY OF THE AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 181406

1. THE LATEST DRAFT LOOKS GOOD BUT THERE ARE TWO AREAS
IN WHICH IT IS DEFICIENT IN MY VIEW. FIRST, IT DOES NOT
MAKE CLEAR WHETHER, IN CASES WHERE ACTION IS OPPOSED BY
THE AMBASSADOR, THE ADMINISTRATOR MUST WAIT FOR APPROVAL
BY WASHINGTON BEFORE TAKING ACTION. BY MY READING, THE
ADMINISTRATOR COULD LET THE AMBASSADOR PROTEST, AND THEN
WHILE WASHINGTON IS CONSIDERING THE QUESTION HE COULD GO
AHEAD WITH HIS ACTION. WASHINGTON (PROBABLY MEANING
STATE) WOULD BE LEFT FACING A FAIT ACCOMPLI.

2. THE SECOND FLAW IS IN THE LAST SENTENCE. THIS PER-
MITS COMMISSION PERSONNEL TO CONTACT PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING TORRIJOS AND
THE PRESIDENT) WITHOUT ADVANCE APPROVAL OF THE AMBASSADOR.
THIS IS A CONSIDERABLE RETROGRESSION FROM THE PRESENT
PRACTICE. PANCANAL OR SOUTHCOM EMPLOYEES HAVE NOT HAD
OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITHOUT MY
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PRIOR APPROVAL. THE SITUATION UNDER THE TREATIES WILL
BE DIFFERENT, BUT THE COMMISSION MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO
GO ITS SOVEREIGN WAY WITHOUT EMBASSY OVERSIGHT. I WOULD
SUGGEST SOMETHING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

"HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS WITH PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS SHALL
BE CLEARED THROUGH THE CHIEF OF MISSION, WHO MAY GRANT

PERMISSION FOR SINGLE MEETINGS OR ON A LONGER RANGE BASIS, AS THE OCCASION SHALL DEMAND. THE CHIEF OF MISSION SHALL BE PROMPTLY INFORMED OF THE RESULTS OF SUCH CONTACTS."

3. THE POINT OF THESE OBJECTIONS IS NOT TO SUGGEST THAT THE ADMINISTRATOR WOULD BE LIKELY TO ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF THE AMBASSADOR, BUT TO POINT OUT THAT HE COULD DO SO. I BELIEVE THAT THESE LOOPHOLES COULD BE PLUGGED WITH A LITTLE JUDICIOUS REDRAFTING. AS I HAVE SAID IN EARLIER MESSAGES, I BELIEVE THE APPROPRIATE NSDM'S SHOULD BE RE-WRITTEN TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE NEW CIRCUMSTANCES. JORDEN

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Message Attributes

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